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## Joint News Release

Joint Public Relations Team

9 p.m., December 25, 2010

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## State braces for major snow storm

### *Driving precautions urged statewide*

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning that is in effect from 7 A.M. Sunday, Dec. 26, until 1 P.M. Monday, Dec. 27. There will be heavy, blowing snow throughout Sunday afternoon and evening, and there is the potential for accumulation of eight to 12 inches statewide.

State officials urge the public to do any necessary driving before the snow starts tomorrow. Once the snow starts, and especially in the afternoon and evening period, travel is strongly discouraged. Visibility will be limited and, coupled with snow accumulation, roads could be treacherous.

As the winter storm moves in, crews from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) are planning to hit the roads, statewide around dawn tomorrow, or sooner, depending on the evolving weather conditions. Supervisors and skeleton crews will work throughout the night, in case circumstances change, or if trouble spots emerge.

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According to Jim Westhoff, a DelDOT spokesman, the department has been monitoring the progress of this storm for several days and will do everything possible to make the roads safe as soon as they can. He cautioned drivers that the weather will make driving dangerous and people should avoid driving tomorrow unless it is absolutely necessary.

"We anticipate DelDOT's plowing operations will be in full gear, fully staffed, all day Sunday, and will remain so until the roads are deemed safe," Westhoff said.

Since travel will be difficult during the storm, everyone should enact their household emergency plan and check water and food supplies and flashlights and battery- or crank-powered radios. Those who need household supplies should obtain them Saturday night or early Sunday morning.

Strong winds gusting up to 35 and 40 mph are predicted and can result in near-blizzard conditions, including white-outs and possibly causing damage to power lines. These conditions are expected to be worse from 2 p.m. until 11 p.m. Sunday. High winds also effect driving conditions that will already be hazardous. Along the coast, gusts may be as high as 50 mph.

Temperatures will be in the 20s, but wind chill factor will be 10 to 15 degrees. Those who go out should keep skin covered. Pets must be kept indoors or otherwise adequately sheltered.

Snow and winds are expected to taper off after midnight, Sunday night, but light snow might continue into Monday morning.

Delaware Emergency Management Agency is coordinating communications among local emergency management offices and all relevant state officials and organizations. The public is urged to monitor all weather and driving conditions and act accordingly to be safe and to protect property. For tips on emergency planning, see [www.dema.delaware.gov](http://www.dema.delaware.gov), [www.delawarecitizencorps.org](http://www.delawarecitizencorps.org) and [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

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